

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAJ-01 EURE-00 ACDA-05 EB-07 /066 W

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O R 151838Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4201

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 26745

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, CSCE, FR

SUBJECT: GISCARD IN MOSCOW: LUKEWARM PRESS SO FAR

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REF: PARIS 26141 (NOTAL)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: PUBLIC FRENCH IMPRESSIONS OF FIRST DAY GISCARD'S MOSCOW TRIP IS FAR CRY FROM THAT WHICH MARKED DE GAULLE, POMPIDOU VISITS TO USSR. EMPHASIS TO THIS POINT IS ON COLD RECEPTION BY BREZHNEV; ON CONTINUING SUBSTANTIVE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LEADERS; AND ON POSSIBILITY THAT SECOND BREZHNEV MEETING WITH GISCARD MAY HAVE BEEN CANCELLED FOR SUBSTANTIVE REASONS. TO UNDERScore CONSTRUCTIVE POSSIBILITIES ELYSEE IS EVIDENTLY SUGGESTING TO PRESS THAT AGREEMENT WILL BE REACHED TO REGULARIZE FRENCH/SOVIET SUMMITS ON ANNUAL BASIS. THERE IS ALSO UNCONFIRMED RUMOR THAT A THIRD ECONOMIC CONFERENCE MAY COME UP IN TALKS TO GIVE BLOC VOICE IN WORLD AFFAIRS. END SUMMARY.

2. REACTIONS AS OF SECOND DAY GISCARD'S MOSCOW TRIP ARE IF ANYTHING MORE LUKEWARM AND RESERVED THAN WAS EXPECTED, AS REFLECTED SAMPLING OF CURRENT HEADLINES: LE MONDE (OCT. 14) "GISCARD IN MOSCOW: DIFFERENCES PERSIST OVER IMPLEMENTATION OF HELSINKI"; FIGARO (OCT. 15): "GISCARD/BREZHNEV: DIFFICULT BUT FRANK DISCUSSIONS"; L'EXPRESS (WEEKLY): "PARIS AND MOSCOW AGREE TO MAKE GISCARD'S TRIP SUCCESS . . . BUT HOW TO GO BEYOND GOOD INTENTIONS?"; AND EVEN L'HUMANITE (OCT.14) "GISCARD IN USSR: POSSIBILITIES FOR COOPERATION AND IMBALANCE". THE POINT IS SUMMED UP BY LE MONDE (OCT. 16 JUST RECEIVED) IN FOLLOWING HEADLINE: "CO-EXISTENCE AND THE IDEOLOGICAL BATTLE: KREMLIN MEETINGS SHOW UP DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BREZHNEV AND GISCARD; SECOND MEETING SUDDENLY ADJOURNED."

3. FIRST MORE DETAILED ACCOUNTS OF GISCARD'S MOSCOW RECEPTION DID LITTLE TO DISPEL EVIDENT SKEPTICISM. TODAY'S FIGARO (OCT. 15), TYPICAL OF NUMBER OF STORIES, REPORTS THAT BREZHNEV RECEIVED GISCARD AT AIRPORT WITH A "TOUCH OF COLDNESS." ARTICLE CLAIMS THAT, ALTHOUGH THERE WAS LARGE OFFICIAL TURNOUT, BREZHNEV REMAINED WOODEN, FORCING ONLY A SMALL SMILE. MODEST, NOTABLY UNENTHUSIASTIC PUBLIC TURNOUT ON ROUTE TO MOSCOW IS ALSO SAID TO HAVE UNDERLINED STIFF ATMOSPHERE OF VISIT. REPORT CONTINUES THAT BREZHNEV SUBSEQUENTLY MAINTAINED CONFIDENTIAL

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RIGID FORMAL POSE SAYING ONLY A FEW WORDS, AT LEAST UP TO OPENING OF FIRST MEETING WITH GISCARD, AND THAT GISCARD FOR HIS PART ALSO SEEMED INCREASINGLY TENSE AND NERVOUS. FIGARO CONCLUDES THAT GISCARD IS NOW PAYING PRICE FOR CHIRAC, PONIATOWSKI REMARKS CRITICAL OF USSR MADE EARLIER THIS YEAR, FOR HIS OWN INITIATIVES IN ABOLISHING CELEBRATION OF VE DAY TO UNDERLINE FRANCO-GERMAN FRIENDSHIP, AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, FOR HIS

INTEREST IN A STRONG AND INDEPENDENT EUROPE. GESTURES, FIGARO CONCLUDES, SUCH AS HIS VISIT TO LENIN'S TOMB HAVE CLEARLY NOT ERASED THE RESULTANT SOVIET DOUBTS. THIS EVENING'S LE MONDE, CITED ABOVE, CONTINUES IN SAME VEIN WITH EXTENSIVE FRONT PAGE SPECULATION AS TO REASONS FOR ADJOURNMENT OF SECOND GISCARD/BREZHNEV MEETING. LE MONDE TENDS TO DISMISS FRENCH PRESS SPOKESMAN'S EXPLANATION THAT GISCARD WAS MERELY TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE SUNNY WEATHER AND IMPLIES THAT MORE SUBSTANTIVE DIFFICULTIES UNDERLIE THIS CHANGE IN GISCARD'S SCHEDULE.

4. AS REGARDS SUBSTANTIVE ASPECTS OF VISIT PRESS ANALYSIS SO FAR LARGELY PARALLEL ITEMS ALREADY REPORTED

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 26745

REFTEL AND PRECEDING MESSAGES. GENERAL IMPRESSION
CONTINUES TO BE THAT MAIN FOCUS WILL BE PARTLY ON CSCE
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IMPLEMENTATION, WHOSE NEGOTIATION WILL BE "DIFFICULT"
(LE MONDE OCT. 14); AND PARTLY ON BILATERAL, LARGELY
ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF VISIT. PRESS CONFIRMS THAT GENERAL
AGREEMENTS ON ENERGY, AVIATION AND TOURISM ARE EXPECTED,
ALTHOUGH WE CONTINUE TO HEAR FROM JOURNALISTIC SOURCES
THAT TOURISM AGREEMENT IN PARTICULAR IS STILL IN TROUBLE
AND MAY NOT BE SIGNED.

5. IN ADDITION, IN EVIDENT EFFORT TO UNDERLINE USEFUL-
NESS OF VISIT SOURCES IN ELYSEE HAVE NOTED TO PRESS
GISCARD'S WILLINGNESS TO REGULARIZE ON ANNUAL BASIS THE
ALREADY VIRTUALLY ANNUAL VISITS BETWEEN SOVIET AND FRENCH
HEADS OF STATE. SIMILARLY WE HAVE NOW HEARD FROM TWO
SEPARATE JOURNALISTIC SOURCES THAT, IN CASTING ABOUT FOR
NEW FOCUS FOR VISIT, GISCARD MAY BE THINKING OF SUGGEST-
ING (OR AGREEING TO?) SOME SORT OF THIRD ECONOMIC CONFER-
ENCE INCLUDING BLOC AND UNDERDEVELOPED AREA REPS, TO
ACCOMMODATE SOVIET INTEREST IN PLAYING A MORE FORMAL
ROLE IN WORLD ECONOMIC AFFAIRS. STORY WHICH WE
ASSUME COMES FROM
ELYSEE SOURCE, HAS NOT APPEARED PUBLICLY SO FAR AND HAS
NOT BEEN CONFIRMED BY OFFICIAL SOURCES.

6. IN SUM, AS GISCARD FOLLOWS IN DE GAULLE'S AND
POMPIDOU'S FOOTSTEPS IN MOSCOW, HIS HOMEFRONT (SO FAR
AT LEAST) IS INCREASINGLY IN DOUBT ABOUT OUTCOME OF
VISIT. APART FROM PREDICTABLE CARPING IN L'HUMANITE
(WHICH CHALLENGES GISCARD'S "SINCERITY" IN GOING TO USSR
AND BLAMES FRANCE FOR HANDICAPPING GROWTH OF FRENCH-
SOVIET ECONOMIC RELATIONS) MAIN QUESTION IN SERIOUS
FRENCH PRESS IS WHETHER GISCARD CAN, OR EVEN SHOULD PRESS
TOWARD NEW FRONTIERS IN DETENTE. VARIETY OF COMMENTATORS
MAKE POINT THAT AFTER DE GAULLE'S INITIATIVE AND GERMAN
OSTPOLITIK HAD BROKEN ICE, MAIN ISSUES ARE NOW CLEARLY

IN US-SOVIET ARENA. AS FOR EUROPE, CONTINUED SOVIET GOOD INTENTIONS ARE ONCE AGAIN IN DOUBT IN FACE OF SOVIET DISINCLINATION TO ACT ON MUCH OF CSCE ACCORDS AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, BECAUSE OF EVENTS IN PORTUGAL. THIS ARGUMENT WAS MADE IN MORE REFINED FORM BY RAYMOND ARON IN MAJOR FIGARO EDITORIAL THIS WEEK. ARON ARGUED THAT THERE SHOULD NOW BE LIMITS TO DETENTE. WESTERN EFFORTS IN MOSCOW HAVE NOT INFLUENCED COMMUNIST BEHAVIOR IN PORTUGAL.
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GAL. FOR PRESENT THE OVERRIDING INTEREST OF FRANCE IN THIS SITUATION, IS TO ASSERT ITS RIGHTS UNDER THE HELSINKI AGREEMENTS, TO PRESERVE "JEALOUSLY" THE POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE OF WESTERN EUROPE AND TO ORGANIZE COMMON DEFENSE.

7. COMMENT: OBVIOUSLY IT IS PREMATURE TO DRAW CONCLUSIONS FROM FRAGMENTARY INITIAL PRESS REACTIONS. THEY DO TEND TO SUPPORT FEELING WE HAVE HAD FOR SOME MONTHS THAT BLOOM OF FRENCH-SOVIET RELATIONS HAS CLEARLY FADED FOR VARIETY OF REASONS, MOST IMPORTANT OF WHICH IS CLEARLY PORTUGAL. IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO SEE WHETHER GISCARD AND BREZHNEV CAN IN THE TIME REMAINING SIGNIFICANTLY CHANGE THE RESERVED ASSESSMENT OF THIS TRIP WHICH IS BUILDING UP IN FRANCE.

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